



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Seattle District

60 Day Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Assessment & Master Plan

Environmental & Cultural Resources Branch
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ATTN: Beth McCasland

Public Notice Date: 14 December 2017
Expiration Date: 14 February 2018
Reference: PL-18-05

Project Name: Albeni Falls Master Plan

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District (Corps) has prepared, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, a draft environmental assessment (EA) to address the potential environmental impacts associated with managing Corps owned properties consistent with a new Master Plan. The purpose of this Public Notice is to solicit comments from interested persons, groups, or agencies. A copy of the draft EA and Master Plan is available on the Seattle District Corps website:

<http://www.nws.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/Environmental-Documents/>

Basin: Columbia River, Pend Oreille, and Clark Fork
Project Name: AFD Master Plan

Copies of the draft EA and Master Plan are also available by request. Please contact Ms. Beth McCasland at 206-764-3641 or via email at the following address:

AlbeniFalls.MasterPlan@usace.army.mil.

ABSTRACT

The draft Environmental Assessment (EA) considers and describes potential environmental effects of the development and implementation of an updated Master Plan for management of natural, cultural and recreational resources at Albeni Falls Dam and Reservoir Project (Project). Master Plans provide guidance for future development and maintenance of recreation and wildlife management areas on Corps lands. They are required for civil works projects and other fee-owned lands for which the Corps of Engineers has administrative responsibility for management. A Master Plan is a planning document that deals in concepts, not in details of design or administration and it provides guidance for future development and maintenance of recreation opportunities. It is a vital tool for responsible stewardship and sustainability of the facility's resources for the benefit of present and future generations. This draft Master Plan would guide and articulate the Corps' responsibilities pursuant to federal laws to preserve, conserve, restore, maintain, manage, and develop the land, water, and associated resources. This draft Master Plan does not address regional water quality, water level management, shoreline management, or the operation and maintenance of project operations facilities (i.e. dam, powerhouse, and/or spillway). The plan is flexible and subject to revisions as dictated by changing needs and conditions.

The existing Albeni Falls Project Master Plan was completed in 1981, but there has been no comprehensive revision to the master plan in more than 30 years. As such, the current master

plan provides an inadequate basis with which to evaluate contemporary proposals. A number of recreational amenities envisioned and described in the 1981 document were never constructed. In addition, there have been changes in demand for recreation and expansive adjacent population growth which dictates the need to update the Master Plan for the Albeni Falls Project. According to Corps' policy, without an approved Master Plan, funding for new recreational development, construction, consolidation or land use change would not be approved.

The proposed revised Master Plan would also incorporate current Corps land use classification standards, include contemporary requirements mandated by federal environmental laws, and better reflect the Corps' Environmental Operating Principles, natural resource management mission, environmental stewardship, and ecosystem management principles.

PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS

The updated Master Plan would be based on an evaluation of the probable impact on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered; among these are: conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

Any person who has an interest that may be affected by the proposed Master Plan update may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Commander within the comment period of this notice, and must clearly set forth the following: the interest that may be affected, the manner in which the interest may be affected by this activity, and the particular reason for holding a public hearing regarding this activity.

The Corps invites submission of factual comment on the environmental impact of the proposal. Comments will also be considered in determining whether it would be in the best public interest to proceed with the proposed action. The Corps will consider all submissions submitted before the expiration date of this notice. The nature or scope of the proposal may be changed upon consideration of the comments received. The Corps will initiate an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and afford all the appropriate public participation opportunities attendant to an EIS, if significant effects on the quality of the human environment are identified and cannot be mitigated.

Submit comments to the address posted at the top of this notice or to Ms. Beth McCasland at AlbeniFalls.MasterPlan@usace.army.mil no later than February 14, 2018 to ensure consideration. Requests for additional information should be directed to Ms. McCasland at 206-764-3641 or the above e-mail address.